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CBW Research Said Benefitting Mankind

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Army is trying to show that chemical warfare research is good for you.

The new issue of the Army Digest says "vast and complex advantages in health, economics and social betterment . . . are accruing to the entire nation from research and development" in chemical and biological warfare.

"This is an area where the Bunsen burner and retort of the chemical laboratory are providing not only defensive chemical-biological capability for our military forces— but where sometimes even the weapons themselves turn out to be of value in fields of medicine, agriculture or manufacturing," said the Digest, a monthly publication distributed within the Army and to interested persons outside the Army.

"Sometimes by accidental discovery, more often by continuing and relentless scientific investigation, the work of the Chemical Corps transcends national defense to bring incalculable benefits to the civilian economy and personal well being. . .

"A quick listing of chemical research and development would include vaccines, compounds for weed control, studies predicting behavior of plant disease epidemics, development of building designs, equipment and working procedures to protect against chemical hazards, and many others."

The Army stated its case at a time when the whole U.S. chemical warfare program is under the heaviest attack in many years.

Among the benefits of CBW research, the Army listed these developments:

— Use of nitrogen mustard for treating cancer.

— Use of nerve gas types to relieve glaucoma, an eye disease which often leads to blindness.

— Antidotes for metal poisoning.

— Application of various toxic compounds in fire extinguishants.

— Improved methods for detecting minute quantities of cyanide in industry.

The Army said also that many devices designed to protect soldiers in the field are now being adapted for surgical use in hospitals or for industrial plants— devices such as carbon monoxide masks.

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Picketing On Tuesday

A demonstration protesting chemical-biological warfare will be staged at the main gate of Fort Detrick Tuesday by the Mid-Atlantic Committee on Fort Detrick it was announced Friday.

The demonstration is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. after which committee members will distribute leaflets in Frederick.

The committee states in a position paper "chemical-biological weapons, like atomic weapons, are indiscriminate, inhumane and uncontrollable.

"Our nation's major biological weapons research and development program, is, at this

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moment, being conducted at Fort Detrick. We object to this manufacture of death.

"The danger to our environment as well as the prospect of the eventual use of these weapons is horrifying."

According to their position paper "no longer should our CBW policy be determined by secretive, military strategists. An informed and concerned public must call for:

"Immediate cessation of all chemical-biological weapons tests.

"Immediate halt to all research, development and stockpiling of chemical - biological weapons with provisions for civilian supervision of disposal of existing stockpiles.

"Immediate resubmission of the 1925 Geneva Protocol for ratification.

"Initiation by the United States of serious chemical-biological warfare discussions leading to international disarmament agreements."

At 8 p.m. Tuesday the committee, which has offices in Washington, is sponsoring a film and lecture about CBW operations. The speaker will be Dr. E. James Lieberman. It will be held at the Paint Branch Unitarian Church, 3215 Powder Mill Road, Adelphi, Md.